

Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Director of Logistics

DATE:

FROM :

SUBJECT: Proposed revision of HB []

1. The three major revisions for page 2 in HB [] as proposed in your 13 October 1961 memorandum, appear to me to be contrary to the basic policies of the Agency Records Management Program and, therefore, I cannot concur in the suggested changes.

2. I am sorry so many officials in your office spent time on this matter that could have been quickly explained and settled by a phone call to me or your Area Records Officer who is quite familiar with the established policies and goals of the Agency Records Program.

3. The proposal in paragraph 2a of your 13 October memorandum, suggesting that 2-drawer safes be made a standard supply item, is contrary to economical and efficient records keeping practices, required by Public Law 645 and Agency Regulation []. For example, a new 4-drawer safe costs approximately \$438 while a 2-drawer costs about \$330. The 2-drawer safes cost three-fourths as much, yet provide only half as much storage space and require the same floor space as the 4-drawer. The use of 2-drawer safes in desks was never endorsed by the Records Management Staff. Further, we were told the supply policy on such safe desks would call for a restricted distribution rather than their being standard and generally available.

4. In the past few years my Staff has been able to postpone purchases of 2-drawer safes costing more than \$50,000. The last time we disapproved such a purchase, the Deputy Director (Support) was called in and his conclusion was to support our position. If offices have room and need safe space we have plenty of good 4-drawer safes. We do buy some 2-drawer safes for special overseas uses, but each request is justified in writing and checked out before being approved. The DDP Records Management Officer vigorously concurs and supports this procedure. I believe this should continue, both for Headquarters and the Field.

5. The second proposal is not quite as clear cut, however, the benefits available to the Agency are so great as to eliminate need for much debate on interpretations of a GSA policy. In every Records Survey my Staff made, we always found several safe drawers filled with unclassified materials--such as blank forms, books, coffee pots, Christmas decorations, personal clothing, and office supplies. As a standard procedure we always insist that safes are too expensive for such use and urge that such material be removed.

6. At our last check, the warehouse had on hand well over 600 surplus, salvaged, uninsulated, 5-drawer, filing cabinets. These metal cabinets cost about \$60 or \$70 when new many years ago. They provide 25% more storage space than a 4-drawer safe and they require less floor space. Therefore, the practical policy we recommend is that unclassified office supplies, forms, and such material be interpreted as "potential files materials" and thereby within the GSA prescribed policy on use of these file cabinets.

7. The standard, 2 door, seven-foot high, supply cabinets are too large and costly for the average office and the use of a surplus 5-drawer cabinet seems a good, practical solution for better utilization of office equipment and conservation of expensive safe and office space. We have checked with GSA and have reviewed their policy. We do not believe our suggested use will violate the letter or intent of their policy. All Agency Records Officers were fully advised of all aspects of this procedure and the established policy for Agency offices. Hundred of these old, surplus cabinets are now being used in this manner. The proposed change would require an expensive conversion to many safes and large unwanted, 2 door supply cabinets. Even small supply cabinets were tested by Office of Logistics and disapproved as economically unacceptable. The miniature supply cabinets are more costly than these surplus file cabinets.

8. In your paragraph 2c concerning the method of record keeping practices by the Area Records Officer to do his or her job, I do not consider it wise, to try and spell out the detailed files, records, and procedures that must be used by every Records Officer

in every office Agencywide. Since our many offices differ widely, both as to procedures and emphasis, and since Records Officers have varying degrees of competence, it would be impractical to attempt to legislate so minor a records keeping procedure. The Handbook spells out the objective; different Records Officers will take different administrative actions. Those actions will be only as complete and efficient as the Records Officer and the Office concerned consider necessary based on their recognition of the advantages inherent in a good Records Management Program covering the creation, use, and disposal of paperwork in that area.

9. Thank you for your interest in improving our Program. There were several word changes in your proposal I agree with and which I would like to see included in future revisions of the Handbook, however, they don't seem to be sufficiently substantive to justify a reprint at this time.